

CHAPTER 9

STIRRING TO SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT

Till Chapter 6, Krishn made a systematic investigation of yog. Its precise meaning, as we have seen, is the conduct of yagya. Yagya represents that special form of worship which provides access to God, and in which the whole animate and inanimate world is offered as a sacrifice. The immortal essence is known with restraint of mind and ultimate dissolution of the restrained mind itself. The one who partakes of what is generated by yagya at its completion is a truly enlightened man, a realized sage and accomplished teacher who is united with the eternal God. This union, joining together of the individual and the Cosmic Soul, is named yog. The conduct of yagya is called action. Krishn then went on to say in Chapter 7 that the doers of this action know him along with the all-pervasive God, perfect action, adhyatm and adhidaiv, as well as adhibhoot and adhiyagya. He further added in Chapter 8 that this is salvation, which is the supreme goal.

In the present chapter he raises the question of the greatness of the Soul who is endowed with yog. Pervading all, he is nonetheless yet uninvolved. Although he acts, he is yet a non-doer. Besides illumining the nature and influence of this accomplished Soul, the chapter also contains a warning against such hindrances as other gods in the way of the practice of yog; it also stresses the importance of finding shelter under a realized sage, an accomplished teacher, who is possessed of such a Soul.

1. “The Lord said, ‘I shall instruct you well with analogy in this mysterious knowledge, O the sinless, after knowing which you will be liberated from this sorrowful world.’”

By offering to impart this knowledge with “vigyan,” Krishn means that he will illustrate it with the achievements of a great Soul of attainment: how he functions simultaneously at all places, how he enlightens, and how as a charioteer he always stands beside the Self. Knowing this Arjun will be emancipated from this world of misery where happiness is impermanent.

2. “This (knowledge) is the monarch of all learning as well as of all mysteries, most sacred, doubtlessly propitious, easy to practise, and indestructible.”

Substantiated by illustration, this knowledge is the sovereign of all learning. But “learning” here does not mean mastering a language or scholarship in its usual sense. True learning is that which enables the man who has acquired it to go along God’s way until he has won salvation. If he gets entangled in the vanity of his achievements or in the material world while he is on the way, it is evident that his learning has failed. His learning, then, is not knowledge but a veil of ignorance. It is only regal learning (rajvidya), spiritual enlightenment, which is profitable beyond any doubt. It is the king of all “secret teaching” ¹ because one can approach it only after the practice of yog is brought to perfection by the unraveling of the knots of both knowledge and ignorance. Holiest of the holy and blessed with excellence, it is also manifestly fruitful. The profit from it is so transparent. No sooner does a man have it than he is rewarded. It is not the blind faith that we will be rewarded in the next life if we are virtuous in this life. Buttressed by

श्रीभगवानुवाचः इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।
 ज्ञान विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽशुभात् ॥१॥
राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।
 प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥२॥

1. One of the different meanings of the word “Upanishad.” The knowledge contained in the Upanishads is indeed secret because traditionally it is imparted only to those who are spiritually ready to receive and profit by it.

awareness of its operation, this knowledge is indestructible and easy to act upon.

Yogeshwar Krishn has told Arjun in Chapter 2 that the seed of yog never perishes. Practising it in even a small measure provides liberation from the great fear of repeated birth and death. In Chapter 6, Arjun requested the Lord to tell him the lot of the feeble worshipper who strays from yog and is, therefore, deprived of the perception which is its final achievement. Krishn then said that the primary need is to know the way of this action (yog) after which, if a man just takes a couple of steps on it, the merit earned by them is never destroyed. He carries this sanskar along with him to the next life and by virtue of it performs the same action with every birth. Thus practising yog over many lives, he at last arrives at the state of salvation, the supreme goal. The same point is made again in the present chapter when Krishn says that although the practice of yog is easy and indestructible, faith is its indispensable requirement.

3. “Men who have no faith in this knowledge, O Parantap, do not attain to me and are doomed to roaming about the mortal world.”

Even the smallest bit of practice of this dharm is never destroyed, but the man whose mind is not fully centered on the object of his worship undergoes repeated birth and death instead of attaining to Krishn. Now the Yogeshwar speaks about God's omnipresence:

4. “The whole world is pervaded by me, the unmanifest Supreme Being, and all beings dwell within my will but I am not in them.”

The unmanifest form in which Krishn exists spreads through every atom of the universe and all beings have their life within him. But he is not in them because he exists in an unmanifest form.

अश्रद्धाऽनाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परंतप ।
अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि ॥३॥
मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥४॥

Since accomplished sages are one with the unmanifest God, they discard their bodies and act in the same divine state.

5. “And even all beings are not within me, and such is the power of my yog-maya that my Spirit, the creator and preserver of all beings, is not within them.”

Even all beings are not within Krishn, because they are mortal and dependent on nature. But such is the greatness of his yog that although he creates and sustains all beings, his Spirit is not in them. I am in the form of the Self not within those beings. This is the achievement of yog. Krishn cites an instance to elucidate the point:

6. “Be it known to you that all beings dwell in me just as the great wind that roams everywhere always dwells in the sky.”

The wind is always in the sky, but cannot taint and affect its brightness. Similarly, all beings are within Krishn, but he is unblemished like the sky. The problem of the power of yog is now resolved. So Krishn next takes up the question of what the yogi does.

7. “All beings, O son of Kunti, attain to my nature and merge into it at the end of a cycle (kalp) and I recreate them at the beginning of another cycle.”

He reshapes beings with special care at the beginning of a phase. They had existed earlier, but they were misshapen. Now he gives them a more refined, more perfect shape. They who were lying in a state of insensibility, he now renders conscious. He also prompts beings to kalp in the other sense of the word. Besides “cycle of time”, kalp also means a change for the better. It is the

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।
भूतमृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥५॥
यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान् ।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥६॥
सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम् ।
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ॥७॥

beginning of a kalp when, escaping from demoniacal and negative impulses, a man comes by the treasure of divinity; and it comes to a close with the worshipper's becoming one with God. A kalp ceases to be after its purpose is achieved. The commencement of worship is the beginning, while the culmination at which the goal is perceived is its end-the point when the Soul, freed from such feelings as attachment and repulsion which effect the creation of all beings who have to be reborn, dwells in his identical, eternal form. This is what Krishn means by saying that beings merge into his nature.

But what kind of "nature" can belong to a sage who has annihilated all nature and become one with God? Does his nature still survive? As Krishn has said in the thirty-third verse of Chapter 3, all beings attain to their own nature. They act according to their predominant property; and even the sage who has achieved knowledge by direct perception acts according to his disposition. He works for the good of those who have straggled. The conduct-the way of life - of the sage who dwells in the ultimate essence is his nature. He conducts himself according to the state of his being. At the end of kalp, men attain to this conduct-this way of life-of accomplished teacher, of realized sages. Krishn then throws further light on the accomplishment by such great Souls.

8. "I repeatedly shape all these beings, who are helplessly dependent on their innate properties, according to their action."

Accepting the way of life which is given to him; Krishn continuously and with special care fashions and refashions all beings who dwell in their own nature and are dominated by the three properties: he prompts them to advance towards the state of his own Self. Does this mean, however, that he also is bound by action?

9. "Unattached and disinterested in these acts, O Dhananjay, I am not bound by action."

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥८॥
न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ।
उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु ॥९॥

According to the ninth verse of Chapter 4 a sage's way of action is unworldly. The fourth verse of the present chapter says that he works in an unmanifest way. Now Krishn says the same thing here again: that he is not attached to the actions he performs imperceptibly. Since the union of his Soul with the Supreme Spirit has bestowed a state of detachment on him, he is no longer bound by action. Since he is now abiding in the very goal that is achieved by action, he is not compelled to do it.

So far the question was of the relationship between acts of nature and the innate property-of the sage's way of life and action. Now what is that which maya creates by assuming the property that belongs to Krishn? That, too, is kalp.

10. "In association with me, O son of Kunti, my maya shapes this world of the animate and the inanimate , and the world revolves like a wheel of recurrence for the aforesaid reason."

By virtue of his spirit that permeates the whole world, this maya (the three-propriety nature, in both its eightfold insensate and conscious forms) shapes the animate and inanimate world. This is the inferior kalp and it is because of this that the world moves in its cycle of birth and death-of coming and going. This lowly kalp that nature brings about, mutable and destructive, is accomplished by maya by virtue of Krishn's innate property. It is not made by him, but the kalp of the seventh verse, which marks the commencement of the Supreme goal, is a creation of the sage himself. In this kalp he himself is the doer who creates with special care, but in the other kalp, nature is the agent which by mere reflection of its might creates the state of transience in which there is change of bodies, of time, and of ages. But although Krishn is so all-pervasive, the deluded do not yet know him.

11. "The deluded who do not know my ultimate being regard me in the human form as but an inferior mortal."

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सृयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥१०॥
अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥११॥

The ignorant who do not know his identity with the Supreme Spirit, the God of all beings, regard Krishn as human and therefore paltry. He dwells in the exalted state of that Supreme Spirit who is the God of all beings, but ignorant men do not know it because he is in mortal form. They address him as a man. And they are hardly to blame. When they look at Krishn, they see only the body of the great Soul. How then are they to know that he dwells in the being of the great God? It is now explained why they are unable to realize the truth.

12. “The ignorant are , like evil spirits, afflicted with the property of darkness and so their hopes and actions and knowledge are all futile.”

The unaware are possessed of futile hope (which can never be fulfilled), futile action (which binds), and futile knowledge (which is really ignorance). Lying in the chasm of unconsciousness and characterized by the gullible nature of devils and demons, by demoniacal nature, they believe Krishn to be but a man. Demons and devils merely represent a property of the mind which has nothing to do with any caste or class. Men with such an inclination are unable to know the reality of Krishn, but sages know him and adore him.

13. “But, O Parth, they who have found shelter in divine nature and know me as the eternal, imperishable source of all beings, worship me with perfect devotion.”

The sages who take refuge in pious impulses, the treasure of divinity, and regard Krishn as the primal source of all beings, unmanifest and eternal, always meditate upon him with devotion only to him and without permitting the thought of anyone else into their mind. The following verse dwells upon the mode of this worship.

मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः ।
राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥१२॥
महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।
भजन्त्यन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥१३॥

- 14. “Always engaged in the recital of my name and virtues, ever-active to realize me, and constantly offering obeisance to me, devotees with a firm determination worship me with undivided faith.”**

Abiding firmly in the observance of the act of devotion, bowing low to Krishn in homage and dwelling in him, men who know the truth endeavour to realize him and worship him with staunch devotion. They are constantly engaged in the act of remembrance and recital, which is nothing else than the yagya that has already been illumined. The same rite is here restated in brief.

- 15. “While some worship me by gyan-yagya as the all-encompassing Supreme Spirit with the feeling that I am all, some worship me with a sense of identity, some with a sense of being separate from me (regarding me as master and themselves as servants), while yet others worship me in many a different fashion.”**

Men who are aware of reality worship Krishn by practising the appointed Way of Discrimination or Knowledge after a due appraisal of their assets and liabilities as well as of their own strength. Some others worship him with a feeling of being identical with him-the feeling that they have to be one with him by dissociating themselves from everything that is other than him; and they devote themselves to him with the total dedication of the Way of Selfless Action. Similarly, there are many other forms of worship. In fact, however, these are all only the higher and lower phases of the same spiritual observance that is called yagya. Yagya begins with reverent service, but how is it performed? By his own admission, Yogeshwar Krishn is himself the doer of yagya. If the sage does not act as the charioteer, the successful accomplishment of yagya is impossible. It is only by his guidance that the worshipper is able to know the stage of spiritual accomplishment at which he stands and the point

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥१४॥
ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्रुतो मुखम् ॥१५॥

on the way he has reached. Krishn then speaks about the performer of yagya.

16. “I am the action that is undertaken, the yagya, the fulfillment of earlier resolutions, the healer, the sacred prayer, the oblation as well as the sacred fire, and I am also the sacrificial act of oblation.”

Krishn is the doer-the agent. In truth, the power behind the worshipper who always urges him on is that of the adored God. So the worshipper's accomplishment is only a gift from him. He is also the yagya which is the appointed mode of worship. The man who tastes the nectar that is generated at the successful completion of yagya is united with the eternal God. Krishn is also the oblation, for it is in him that the endless sanskar of the past is dissolved; their ultimate resolution is provided by him. He is also the remedy that cures the malady of worldly misery. Men are rid of this ailment by attaining to him. He is also the sacred incantation that is offered to the deity, for it is he who provides the strength by which the mind is concentrated on breath. Being the one who adds to the ardour of this deed, he is also the matter which is offered as oblation. He is also the sacred fire, because all desires of the mind are burnt out in his radiant flame. And he is also the sacrificial act of yagya.

Here Krishn repeatedly speaks in the first person: “I am ... I am” The implication of this is only that it is he who stands inseparably with the individual Self as an inspiration and leads the observance of yagya to successful completion by constant appraisal. This is named vigyan. The most revered Maharaj Ji would repeatedly tell us that the act of devotional adoration does not begin until the revered God appears as the charioteer to restrain each single breath. We may close our eyes, engage in the act of pious adoration, and mortify the senses by severe austerities, but unless the desired God comes down to the level at which we are and stands inseparably and watchful by the Self, the essence of worship cannot be gained. This is why Maharaj Ji used to say,

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वाधाहमहमौषधम् ।

मान्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निहं हुतम् ॥१६॥

“If you but behold me, I shall give you everything.” It is the same as Krishn’s saying that he is the doer of all.

17. “And I too am the bearer and preserver of the whole world as also the giver of rewards for action; father, mother and also the grandsire; the sacred, imperishable OM who is worthy of being known; and all Ved-Rig, Sam and Yajur.”

It is Krishn who supports the whole world. He is the “father” who provides, the “mother” who conceives and gives birth, and the “grandsire” who is the ancient source into whom all being also merge at last. He is worthy of being known as also the sacred OM which may also be interpreted as the Self’s resemblance to God (aham+akarah = Omkarah).

That OM (God) is identical with him and so his Self is fit for knowing. He is also the agent of the three parts of the observance of yog: Rig-adequate prayer, Sam-evenness of mind; and Yajur-the ordained yagya for union with the Supreme Spirit.

18. “I am the supreme goal, the sustainer and Lord of all, the maker of good and evil, the abode and shelter of all, the benefactor who wants nothing in return, the beginning and the end, the fountainhead as well as that in whom all beings are dissolved, and also the indestructible primal energy.”

Krishn is the salvation that is the ultimate goal that everyone wishes to attain to. As the witness who stands as an onlooker and knows everything, he is the master of all beings. He is the imperishable primal cause and he is also the doom (destruction) in whom all good and evil are dissolved. He possesses all these glories. Moreover,

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोँकार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ॥१७॥
गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।
प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥१८॥

19. “I am the sun that burns, I draw the clouds and also make them rain, and, O Arjun, I am the drought of immortality as well as death, and I am also both substance and shadow.”

He is the sun, the giver of light, and yet there are many who regard him as unreal. Such men are victims of mortality and so Krishn is also the punishment that is meted out to them.

20. “Men who do pious deeds enjoined by the three Ved, who have tasted nectar and freed themselves from sin, and who wish for heavenly existence through worshipping me by yagya, go to heaven (Indrllok) and enjoy godly pleasures as a reward for their virtuous acts.”

Although they practise all the three parts of worship-prayer (Rig), equal conduct (Sam), and union (Yajur), partake of the dim light of the moon (Rayi, the form-giving substance), rid themselves of sin, and worship Krishn by the prescribed mode of yagya, such men pray for the attainment of heaven because of which they are rewarded with immortality and have to be reborn. They worship him and also adopt the appointed mode, but they beseech for heavenly joys in return. So rewarded for their piety they go to the abode of Indr² and enjoy the celestial pleasures of gods. Krishn is thus also the provider of these pleasures.

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामिच ।

अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥१९॥

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।

ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक-मश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥२०॥

2. King of Gods in Hindu mythology like Zeus in Greek mythology.

21 “With the gradual wearing out of the merits of their piety, they go back to the mortal world after enjoying the pleasures of great heaven ; and it is thus that they who seek refuge in the desire-oriented action prescribed by the three Ved and covet joy are condemned to repeated death and birth.”

The yagya they perform as well as its threefold means, prayer, evenness of mind, and dedication that unites, is the same, and they also seek refuge in Krishn, but they have to undergo rebirth because of their desires. So it is of the utmost importance that desire is thoroughly subdued. But what is the lot of those who are liberated from all desire?

22. “I myself protect the yog of men who abide in me with steady and undeviating faith and who worship me selflessly, constantly remembering me as God.”

Krishn himself bears the burden of the ardent worshipper's progress along the path of yog. He takes upon himself the responsibility for the protection of his yog. Despite this, however, men are given to worshipping other gods.

23. “Although even covetous devotees indeed worship me in worshipping other gods, their worship is against the ordained provision and therefore enveloped by ignorance.”

Yogeshwar Krishn has here for the second time taken up the subject of other gods. It was in verses 20-23 of Chapter 7 that he first told Arjun that deluded men whose wisdom is ravished by desires worship other gods, and that there truly exist no such entities. It is Krishn who steadies and strengthens the faith of such worshippers in whatever it is inclined to, whether a Peepal tree, a

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशान्ति ।

एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकाम लभन्ते ॥२१॥

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥२२॥

येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धायान्विताः ।

तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥२३॥

piece of rock, some departed Spirit, or a goddess. He is also the provider of their rewards. The fruits of devotion are doubtlessly achieved by these worshippers, but the rewards they obtain are momentary and ephemeral. They are here today, but they will be consumed tomorrow after they have been enjoyed. They wear out, whereas the rewards of the true worshippers of Krishn are never destroyed. So it is only the ignorant who have been robbed of their wisdom by desire that worship other gods.

In verses 23-25 of the present chapter, Yogeshwar Krishn reiterates that they who adore other gods also really worship him, but their worship is improper because this form of devotion is not ordained. There is no power like gods and to endeavour to realize them is, therefore, like striving for the unreal. But what exactly is wrong with the worship of other gods if it is in fact a worship of Krishn himself and also a begetter of rewards? Krishn answers the question thus:

24. “They have to undergo rebirth because they are ignorant of the reality that I am the enjoyer as well as the master of all yagya.”

Krishn is the enjoyer of yagya because whatever is offered as sacrifice is dissolved in him. He is the blessedness that results from yagya and also the master of the sacred rite. But they who do not know this fall from grace. They are destroyed, sometimes caught in the trap of worship of other gods and sometimes in the web of their own desires. Until they have perceived the essence, they are deprived even of the everlasting fulfillment of their desires. What ultimately becomes of them is disclosed in the following verse:

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।
न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ॥२४॥

25. “Men who are devoted to gods attain to gods, worshippers of ancestors attain to their ancestors, worshippers of beings attain to the state of beings, and my worshippers attain to me.”

Rather than really attaining to gods because they are nonexistent, their worshippers just delude themselves with fancies. They who practise ancestor-worship are trapped in the abyss of the past. Worshippers of beings end up in mortal bodies. But they who are single-mindedly dedicated to Krishn attain to him. Although yet in their mortal bodies, they truly become him. That is the identity of the worshipper with the adored God. And such worshippers never come to grief. Moreover, even the mode of this worship of Krishn is so simple:

26. “I lovingly accept the offerings of leaves, flowers, fruit, and water the selfless worshipper makes to me with true devotion.”

This loving acceptance by Krishn of whatever offering is made to him by the earnest and devoted worshipper is the commencement of devout reverence. Therefore,-

27. “You should, O son of Kunti, dedicate to me whatever you do, eat, offer as sacrifice, give as alms, and also your penance.”

Krishn will bear the responsibility for guarding the sphere of Arjun's yog if he performs all his deeds, from the humble act of eating to the mortification of his mind and senses to shape them in accordance with the nature of his quest, with a sense of total resignation.

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान् पितृन्यान्ति पितृव्रताः ।
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥२५॥
पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥२६॥
यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥२७॥

28. “Possessed thus of the yog of renunciation by the sacrifice of all your acts, you will be freed from good as well as evil fruits which are the shackles of action, and attain to me.”

In the above three verses, Krishn has systematically dealt with the means of accomplishment and its outcome. The three suggested ways are: first, offering of humble gifts such as leaves and flowers, fruit, and water with total devotion; secondly, performance of action with a sense of dedication, and; lastly, complete renunciation in the spirit of self-surrender. By practising them Arjun will be doubtlessly freed from the bonds of action and by this liberation he will attain to the sublime state of Krishn. The terms “liberation” and “achievement” as employed here complement each other. Krishn then speaks about the profit that will accrue from the worshipper’s attainment of his state.

29. “Although I abide evenly in all beings and there is no one who is either dear or hateful to me, worshippers who contemplate me with loving devotion abide in me and I in them.”

Krishn pervades all beings in an equal way, but he has a special relationship with his wholly dedicated worshippers, for they live in him and he in them. This is the only kinship he knows. The worshipper’s mind and heart overflow with Krishn’s presence and there is then no difference between the one and the other. Does it mean, however, that only the most fortunate are privileged to undertake this act of divine adoration? In Yogeshwar Krishn’s words:

30. “Even if a man of the most depraved conduct worships me incessantly, he is worthy of being regarded as a saint because he is a man of true resolve.”

शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्षयसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥२८॥
समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥२९॥
अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥३०॥

If even a man of evil deeds remembers and adores Krishn with a single-minded devotion, believing that no object or god besides Krishn is worthy of worship, he is fit to be thought of as a sage. He is not yet a saint, but there is at the same time not even the least doubt of his becoming one, for he has devoted himself to the task with real determination. So everyone, you and I all, whatever be the circumstance of our birth, are entitled to the act of worship. The only condition is that the worshipper is a human, because man alone is capable of true resolve. Geeta is meant for the upliftment of sinners, as Krishn says—

31. “Thus he shortly grows pious and achieves eternal peace, and so, O son of Kunti, you should know beyond any doubt that my worshipper is never destroyed.”

If engaged in devotional contemplation, even a wicked man soon grows righteous, becomes one with the almighty God, and realizes the ultimate, imperishable repose. Arjun is told to keep it in mind that Krishn’s earnest devotee is never destroyed. Even if the effort somehow grows feeble, in the next life it is resumed from the very point at which it was discontinued earlier and, beginning with what was done before, the worshipper presently attains to the most sublime peace. Therefore, all men of virtuous as well as of unrighteous conduct and all others have the right to contemplate and adore. More than this,-

32. “Since even women, Vaishya and Shudra, whose births are regarded as inferior, attain, O Parth, to the supreme goal by taking refuge in me...”

Throwing light upon demoniacal nature, Krishn points out in verses 7-21 of Chapter 16 that they who give up sacred precepts and only pray for namesake out of conceit are the most despicable among men. They who make vain prayers which are but only

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।

कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥३१॥

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।

स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥३२॥

nominally yagya are cruel and sinful. “Vaishya” and “Shudr” stand for, as we have seen, only different stages of the path that leads to God. Women have been sometimes honoured and sometimes denigrated, but they as well as Vaishya and Shudr have an equal right to the performance of yog. So the teaching of Geeta is for entire mankind, for all men, irrespective of their conduct and circumstance of birth. It instructs all of us without any discrimination in what is propitious. The Geeta thus embodies a universal message.

33. “It hardly needs saying that since pious Brahmin and royal sages (rajarshi) attain to salvation, you should also renounce this miserable, ephemeral, mortal body and always engage in my worship.”

Let alone those men and women in the Brahmin and Kshatriya rajarshi stages, ultimate absolution is within the reach of devotees in the stage of Vaishya, and Shudr as well. Brahmin is but a particular stage of spiritual growth which is blessed with all the virtues that lead the individual Soul to the Supreme Spirit. That which incorporates the merits of peace, humble beseeching, perception, contemplation, and readiness to follow the signs from the worshipped God is the state of Brahmin. A Kshatriya who has been elevated to a sage by his pious life and austere devotion is endowed with the spirit of accomplishment, prowess, sense of authority, and a natural reluctance to withdraw from the undertaken enterprise. The yogi who have arrived at this stage of yog, it is needless to say, surely succeed in completing their journey. So Arjun, too, should renounce this joyless and transient human body to devote himself to Krishn’s worship.

It is for the fourth time that Krishn has spoken here of the four varn-Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudr. He has said in Chapter 2 that there is no more profitable way than war for a Kshatriya; and subsequently added in Chapter 3 that even dying for one’s inherent dharma is more desirable. In Chapter 4 he said

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥३३॥

that he is the creator of the four varn. It is meant by this, as it has been repeatedly stressed, that he has divided action into four phases on the basis of their innate properties. Performance of yagya is the one appointed task and they who do it belong to four categories. At the point at which a worshipper is initiated into the way, he is a Shudr because of his inadequate knowledge. When he has developed a partial capacity for accomplishment and accumulated some spiritual wealth, the same worshipper turns into a Vaishya. Ascending yet higher and acquiring the strength to carve his way through the three properties of nature, he becomes a worshipper of the Kshatriya class. And the same worshipper is elevated to the rank of a Brahmin when he is infused with the qualities that unite the Soul with God. Kshatriya and Brahmin worshippers are nearer to attainment than the Vaishya and Shudr. Since even the latter are assured of the final bliss, there is hardly any need to speak anything of the lot of worshippers who have achieved a higher status.

Also, the Upanishad, of which the Geeta is an abstract, abound in allusions to women who were endowed with the sublime knowledge of God. Even all the strenuous but futile attempts to codify the rights and prohibitions derived from the spiritually timid and conventional study of the part of Ved known as the Work cannot make us ignore the unambiguous assertion by Krishn that women as well as men can also participate in the ordained action of performing the worship that is named yagya. So it is but proper that his last words to Arjun in the chapter are words of encouragement for carrying out the deed of worship with firm devotion.

34. “If, taking refuge in and with a total devotion of the Self to me, you contemplate, remember with humble reverence, and worship only me (Vasudev), you will attain to me.”

Remembering none except Krishn and restraining the mind from having any thought that is not of him, firm devotion, incessant meditation and recital with humble reverence, and a total absorption of the Soul in him, are the prerequisite for Arjun as well as any

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां मनस्कुरु ।

मामेवैष्यसि युक्तवैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥३४॥

other worshipper's realizing the immutable, eternal Supreme Spirit within him.



Addressing Arjun as a sinless devotee, Krishn has told him at the beginning of the chapter that he would elaborate and demonstrate to him the mysterious knowledge of God, blessed with which he would break with this world of misery, and after knowing which there will remain nothing else for him to know. With this knowledge he will be liberated from the bonds of the world. So this knowledge is the king of all learning. Real knowledge is that which provides access to the Supreme Spirit and is surely propitious. It is also "secret teaching" because it reveals the inscrutable magnificence of God.

It is transparently fruitful, easy of practice, and imperishable. If we succeed in practising even a little of it, it brings freedom from the great fear of recurrent birth and death. Practised in even a small measure, the merit earned from it is never destroyed and by virtue of it the doer succeeds in finally arriving at the supreme goal. But there is a condition to this attainment. Rather than achieve the final bliss, the man who is devoid of faith gropes about in the vicious maze of worldly life.

Yogeshwar Krishn has also in the chapter discoursed on the greatness of yog. Getting away from the fraternity of grief is yog. That which is completely rid of both attachment and aversion to the world is yog. Yog is the name of union with the sublime essence that God is. Attainment to that God is the culmination of yog. Arjun has been told to keep in mind the authority of the sage who has been initiated into yog. Since Krishn is such a yogi, although he is the creator and sustainer of all beings, his Spirit is not in them. He dwells in the identical Supreme Spirit and so he has become him. As the wind sweeping through the sky cannot sully its brightness, even so, although all beings are within Krishn, he is unattached to them.

Krishn shapes and refines beings with special care at the beginning of kalp and at its completion all these beings attain to his innate nature or, in other words, to the yog-endowed sage's way of

life and unmanifest existence. Such a sage goes beyond the sway of nature after the moment of perception and yet, although constantly dwelling in his Self, he works for the good of mankind. This is the sage's way of life and the conduct of this way of life is the nature of a sage.

While Krishn is the creator who stirs beings to Self-improvement, the other creator is the three-propertyed nature which in association with him brings forth the world of the animate and the inanimate. This, too, is kalp that is characterized by a constant change of bodies, of properties, and of time. Goswami Tulsidas has represented the same as that fathomless, dark pit of worldly life in which all beings lie in wickedness and terrible misery. Nature is divided into knowledge and ignorance. Ignorance is evil and sorrowful and, helplessly spurred by it, a being dwells like a prisoner. Thwarted by ignorance, he is hemmed in by time, action, and the natural properties. Opposed to it is the yog-maya, the maya of knowledge, of which Krishn himself is the creator. It is this yog-maya that fashions the world and the properties of nature are dependent upon this power. The quality of doing good belongs to God alone. While there is no excellence in nature which is not perishable, it is the awareness of God in knowledge that stirs beings to strive towards his state of perfection.

Thus there are two kinds of kalp. One of them is the cycle of change of object, body, and time-rendered by nature in conjunction with Krishn. But the other higher kalp, which bestows refinement on the Soul, is fashioned by accomplished sages; it is they who instill consciousness into the inert nature of beings. Commencement of worship is the beginning of this kalp, whereas the successful completion of worship marks its close, with which the malady of worldly misery is cured and replaced by a total absorption in God. At this point the yogi attains to Krishn's way of life as well as state. The sage's way of life after attainment is his nature.

Sacred texts tell us that a kalp is completed only with the passing away of the four ages (yug), after which there is the phenomenon of total dissolution known as doom. This is, however, a misrepresentation of the truth. Yug also means "two." Yug-dharm³

3. See the exposition of verse 8 in chapter 4.

persists so long as we are away from the worshipped God and he is away from us. Goswami Tulsidas has referred to this in the “Uttar Kand” of his Ram Charit Manas. So long as the property of ignorance and darkness (tamas) predominates and there is only as insignificant presence of rajas, there are malice and contradictions all around. A man living in this state may be said to belong to Kaliyug. He is unable to contemplate God and worship him. But there is a change of age, of yug, with the commencement of worship. Now the property of rajas begins to grow, tamas is gradually weakened, and there emerge even some traces of sattwa in the worshipper’s disposition. This is the stage at which he swings between happiness and fear, and with this the worshipper enters into the second age of Dwapar. Gradually, then, as the property of sattwa grows plentiful and only a little of rajas remains, the inclination to the act of worship grows progressively stronger. This is the third age, Treta, in which the worshipper practises renunciation through the performance of yagya. At this point there is inculcated in him the capacity for recitation at the level of yagya, whose strength and weakness, rise and fall, depend upon the control of breath. When only sattwa remains and all conflicts are overcome, and along with this there is poise of mind, there is then the age of achievement—the domination of Satyug. At this stage the yogi’s knowledge is on the verge of transformation into practical experience because he is now close to perfection. Now he has the capacity to spontaneously hold himself in the state of meditation.

Men of discrimination understand the changes, the rise and fall, of yug-dharm.. They give up unrighteousness to restrain the mind and engage in piety. When the restrained mind, too, is dissolved, the kalp along with its different ages comes to a close. After bringing about the union with perfection, the kalp also ceases. This is the “doom” in which nature is dissolved in the Soul. After this, the sage’s way of life is his innate quality—his nature.

Yogeshwar Krishn has then told Arjun that ignorant men do not know him. They regard even him, the God of gods, as of no importance and as a mere mortal. This ironic situation of being ignored by contemporaries has faced every great sage. They have even been castigated and Krishn was no exception to this. Although he dwells in the Supreme Being he has a human body, because of

which the ignorant contemptuously address him as a trivial mortal. The hopes and actions and knowledge of such men are all futile. They are the ones who erroneously believe that they are doers of selfless action just by saying that they are so, irrespective of whatever they do. These men of demoniacal inclination are unable to recognize the reality of Krishn. But they who have acquired the treasure of divinity know and worship him. They always think of and remember his excellence.

There are two ways of intense devotion-of the one true action. The first is the yagya of knowledge, the way on which the worshipper treads relying upon his own strength and after a careful review of his capacity. The other way is that on which the worshipper views the relationship between God and himself as akin to that between master and servant, and in which the prescribed action is entered upon with a sense of surrender to the accomplished teacher. These are the two points of view with which people worship Krishn. But the yagya they accomplish, the sacrifices they make, the performer, and the faith-the remedy that cures the malady of worldly existence, are all Krishn himself. He is also the supreme goal that the worshipper aims at achieving at last.

This yagya is performed by means of prayer, rituals, and procedures that are designed to bring about equanimity in the practitioner. There are worshippers, however, who adopt these means but desire heaven in return, and that is what Krishn bestows upon them. By the dint of their pious acts they dwell in the celestial world of Indr and enjoy it for long. But when the earned merit is gradually worn out, they have to come back to the mortal world and undergo re-birth. Their action was right and yet they are condemned to recurrent birth because of their desire. So total liberation from desire is a primary necessity. The yog of those who remember and contemplate Krishn with perfect concentration, with the feeling that there is nothing else to desire except him, and in whose act of worship there is not even the least flaw, is protected by Krishn himself.

Despite all this, men worship other gods. In fact, in worshipping even other gods they worship Krishn himself, but this mode of worship is not ordained. They are unaware that he is the enjoyer of

their yagya- their sacrifices and so, although they worship, they fail to realize him. They thus fail in their quest. They only succeed in attaining to the fancied forms of gods, beings, and ancestors, whereas men who are truly devoted to Krishn dwell directly in him and assume his own being.

Krishn has represented the act of yagya as easy to practice. Whatever his worshippers offer him, he accepts. So Arjun is advised to surrender all his devotional acts to Krishn. When he is completely detached, endowed with yog, and freed from the bonds of action, he will know salvation which also is Krishn himself.

All beings are his, but there is no one whom he loves and no one whom he abhors. Yet, however, he dwells in his earnest devotee and that devotee in him. Even the most wicked and sinful man who worships him with total dedication is worthy of being regarded as a saint, because his steady resolve will soon unite him with the Supreme Spirit and bless him with eternal peace. A true devotee of Krishn is never destroyed. Whether a Shudr, a depraved man, an aborigine, looked down on by the conventional culture, or one with whatever name he is known by, or a man or a woman, or one who had demoniacal nature and lowly birth-they all attain to the supreme glory if they take refuge in Krishn and worship him with firm intentness. So there is absolutely no doubt about the ultimate salvation of those who have reached the stage of Brahmin and royal sages (rajarshi) who are well-endowed with virtues that unite the Soul with God. Their final absolution is assured beyond any doubt, and so Arjun too should always remember and be reverent to Krishn. If he seeks shelter under him, he will attain to him and thus secure a state from which there is no going back.

Thus, in the present chapter, Krishn has dwelt upon the spiritual knowledge which he himself brings to the state of consciousness. This is the sovereign knowledge which is, after it has been once awakened, doubtlessly propitious.

**Thus concludes the Ninth Chapter, in the Upanishad of the
Shreemad Bhagwad Geeta, on the knowledge of the
Supreme Spirit, the Science of Yog, and the Dialogue
between Krishn and Arjun, entitled :
“Rajvidya Jagriti” or “Stirring to Spiritual Enlightenment”**

**Thus concludes Swami Adgadanand’s, exposition of the
Ninth Chapter of the Shreemad Bhagwad Geeta in
“Yatharth Geeta.”**

HARI OM TAT SAT